

**La Jolla Goes Underground and Underwater**  
**By Council President Scott Peters, First District**  
**For the La Jolla Village News, September 2006**

La Jolla is home to some of the most beautiful views in the entire country. With our blue skies and gorgeous scenery, it's no wonder that tourists flock to our community. But for locals, that beautiful view is often marred by "sky graffiti," the overhead utility lines that run through our older neighborhoods.

After decades of putting up with this visual blight, my colleagues and I on the City Council spearheaded a comprehensive utility undergrounding program nearly four years ago. Our goal was to have all utility lines buried underground within 25 years. In La Jolla, our goal is to have undergrounding complete by 2020.

There are 24 undergrounding projects scheduled for the First District over the next 18 years. These blocks cover La Jolla, University City and Carmel Valley. The first project selected was Block 1F, which covers the northern section of the Barber Tract. This includes the historic and picturesque coastal zone between Windansea and the Village.

I decided that the fairest way to determine the order of projects was through a public lottery. A random drawing was held at a La Jolla Community Planning Association meeting in 2004, with Walt Hall pulling names out of hat. To see a list of the District One undergrounding project you can visit my website, [www.sandiego.gov/cd1](http://www.sandiego.gov/cd1).

Construction on the Barber tract project was scheduled to begin in late 2005, but due to shortages in construction materials after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the timeline was pushed back slightly. The city is now ready to break ground in September, with construction projected to take 18 to 24 months.

The process of undergrounding these utility lines includes digging trenches, pulling down poles and lines, and other noisy inconveniences. SDG&E, SBC, Time Warner and Cox are all working with the city to simultaneously bury all electrical, cable and telephone lines. I ask for your patience as these crews do their work. I promise that you will be pleased with the end result!

For more information on the City's utility undergrounding program, you can visit the City's website, [www.sandiego.gov/undergrounding](http://www.sandiego.gov/undergrounding).

**On your mark, get set...**

It's almost time for one of my favorite summertime traditions, the La Jolla Rough Water Swim. On September 10, more than 2000 swimmers will choose between three courses, the 250 yard Junior Course, the one-mile Master and Amateur course and the three-mile "Gatorman" course.

This is the 76<sup>th</sup> year swimmers have made the course from La Jolla Cove to Scripps Pier and back. The tradition began in 1916, the year of the first San Diego World's Fair. The World's Fair Committee asked La Jolla to host an event to showcase the best of their community. That year seven men participated in the rough water race. Last year, more than 2000 braved the cold and the waves.

Traditions like this, and the volunteers who make them possible, are part of what make La Jolla such a special place. I hope to see you at the Cove on September 10! For more information on the Rough Water Swim or to volunteer, visit their website [www.ljrws.com](http://www.ljrws.com).